

THE
Devout Christian's
REMEMBRANCER.

BEING
Practical Discourses
UPON
The FOUR LAST THINGS:

VIZ.

Death, } Heaven,
Judgment, } And Hell.

Collected from the Works of
Bishop Taylor, Bp. Beveridge, Dr.
Sherlock, Mr. Kettlewell, &c.

The Second Edition.

By the AUTHOR of *The Devout
Christian's Companion.*

L O N D O N.

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TO THE
READER.

AS the SUBJECTS herein treated
of are of the greatest Importance,
so it is hoped that by a serious
Perusal they will have the desired Effect
upon every Reader.

The Method of this small Treatise is
the same which was before taken in
the Devout Christians Companion;
to preserve the Entire sense, Expressions,
and Thoughts of the AUTHORS
made

TO the READER.

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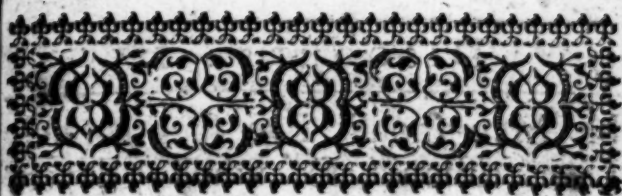
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S. Ambrosius a. 14



A

Practical Discourse

CONCERNING

DEATH.

From Dr. SHERLOCK.



HERE is not a more effectual way to revive the true Spirit of Christianity in the World, than seriously to meditate on what we commonly call the *Four last Things*, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; for it is morally impossi-
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ble Men should live such careless Lives, should so wholly devote themselves to this World, and the Service of their Lusts; should either cast off the Fear of *God*, and all Reverence for his Laws; to satisfy themselves with some cold and formal Devotions, were they possessed with a warm and constant Sense of these things. For what manner of Men ought we to be, who know that we must shortly Die, and come to Judgment, and receive according to what we have done in this World, whether it be Good or Evil, either Eternal Rewards in the Kingdom of Heaven, or Eternal Punishment with the Devil and his Angels?

That which first presents it self to our Thoughts, and shall be the Subject of this Discourse, is DEATH, a very terrible Thing, the very naming of which, is apt to chill our Blood and Spirits, and to draw a dark Veil over the Glories of this



this Life. And yet this is the Condition of all Mankind, we must as surely Die, as we are Born: *For it is appointed unto Men once to die.*

Now to improve this Meditation to the best Advantage, I shall, 1. consider what Death is, and what Wisdom that should teach us. 2. The Certainty of our Death, That *it is appointed unto Men once to die.*

3. The Time of our Death, it must be once, but when we know not.

4. The Natural Fears and Terrors of Death, or our Natural Aversion to it, and how they may be allayed and sweetned.

First, What Death is; and I shall consider Three Things in it: 1. That it is our leaving this World. 2. Our putting off these earthly Bodies. 3. Our entrance into a New and unknown State of Life. For when we die, we do not fall into nothing, or into a profound Sleep, into a State of Silence and Insensibility, till

the Resurrection ; but we only change our Place, and our Dwelling ; we remove out of this World, and leave our Bodies to sleep in the Earth till the Resurrection ; but our Souls and Spirits still live in an invisible State.

First then, Let us consider Death only as our leaving this World ; there is a great Agreeableness between the Things of this World, and an earthly Nature, they are a great Support and Comfort to us in this mortal State, and therefore while we live in this World, we may value the Enjoyments of it, for the Ease and Conveniences of Life ; but we must neither call this Life, nor any Enjoyments of it, our own, because they are short and perishing ; we are here but as Travellers in an Inn, it is not our Home and Country ; it is not our Portion and Inheritance ; but a moveable and changeable Scene, which is entertaining

tertaining at present, but cannot last: The World it self will not last long, tho' it will out-last us; but we are to continue here so little a while, that we have no Reason to call it our Home, or to place our Enjoyment in it. But the other World must be infinitely a more happy Place than this, because it will last infinitely longer. And therefore let us live like Men who are born for greater Things than this World affords; let us endeavour to inform our selves, what the Happiness of the next World is, and how we may attain it; and let us use all present Things, as those who know there are infinitely greater and better Things reserved for us in the next World. It would not be worth the while to live some few Years here, were we not to live for ever; and therefore it becomes a wise Man, who remembers that he must shortly leave this

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World,

World, to make this present Life wholly subservient to his future Happiness.

Secondly, Let us now consider Death, as it is our putting off these Bodies; for this is the proper Notion of Death, the Separation of Soul and Body, that the Body returns to Dust, the Soul or Spirit unto God who gave it: When we die, we do not cease to be, nor cease to live, but only cease to live in these earthly Bodies; the vital Union between Soul and Body is dissolved, we are no longer encloister'd in a Tabernacle of Flesh, we no longer feel the Impressions of it, neither the Pains nor Pleasures of the Body can affect us; it can charm, it can tempt no longer; this needs no Proof, but very well deserves our most serious Meditations.

For *First*, This teaches us the Difference and Distinction between Soul and Body, which Men, who
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are sunk into Flesh and Sense, are apt to forget; nay, to lose the very Notion and Belief of it; it teaches us that the Soul is the only Principle of Life and Sensation: The Body cannot live without the Soul, but as soon as it is parted from it, it loses all Sense and Motion, and returns to its original Dust; but the Soul can, and does live without the Body, and therefore is the Principle of Life. It teaches us not to Glory nor Pride our selves much in these Bodies, nor to spend too much of our Time about them; for after all our Care, they will tumble into Dust, and commonly much the sooner for our Indulgence of them. We cannot keep them long here, they are corruptible Bodies; we must part with them for a while, and if ever we expect and desire a happy Meeting again, we must use them with Modesty and Reverence now, *and present them a living Sacrifice,*

crifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable Service.

Thirdly, Let us next consider Death, as it is an entrance upon a new and unknown State of Life; for it is a new Thing to us to live without these Bodies, it is what we have never tried yet, and we cannot guess how we shall feel ourselves, when we are stript of Flesh and Blood. This must needs be a very surprizing Change; and tho' we are assur'd of a very great Happiness in the next World, which infinitely exceeds whatever Men call Happiness or Pleasure here, yet most Men are very unwilling to change a known, for an unknown Happiness; and it confounds and amazes them to think of going out of these Bodies, they know not whither. Now this Consideration will suggest several very wise and useful Thoughts to us. As,

1st, How necessary an entire Trust and Faith in God is: We cannot live happily without it in this World, and I am sure we cannot die comfortably without it: For this is the noblest Exercise of Faith, to be able chearfully to resign up our Spirits into the Hands of God, when we know so little of the State of the other World whither we are going.

2^{dly}, The State of the other World being so much unknown to us, is a very good Reason why we should chearfully comply with all the Terms and Conditions of the Gospel; to do whatever our Saviour requires, that we may obtain Eternal Life.

3^{dly}, Tho' the State we enter on at Death, be in a great Measure unknown to us, yet this is no reasonable Discouragement to good Men, nor Encouragement to the bad. It is no reasonable Discouragement

agement to good Men; for tho' we do not know what it is, yet we know it is a great Happiness; so it is represented to us in Scripture, as a Kingdom, and a Crown, an eternal Kingdom, and a never-fading Crown; that it is a State of such Happiness, so far beyond any thing we ever experienc'd yet, that we cannot form any Notion or Idea of it; we know that there is such a Happiness; we know in some measure wherein this Happiness consists, namely, in seeing God, and the *Blessed Jesus*; in praising them, and in conversing with Saints and Angels; in beholding such things as neither *Eye hath seen*, and hearing such things as *Ear hath not heard*, and in knowing such things as it *hath not entered into the Heart of Man to conceive*; and therefore we should entertain our selves with the Hopes of this unknown Happiness; of those Joys, which we now have such imperfect

perfect Conceptions of. Nor is it on the other hand, any Encouragement to bad Men, that the Miseries of the other World are unknown: For it is known, that God has threatned very terrible Punishments against bad Men; they are represented by the most dreadful and terrible things, by *Lakes of Fire and Brimstone, Blackness of Darkness, the Worm that never dieth, and the Fire that never goeth out*: But bad Men think this cannot be true in a litteral Sense, That there can be no Fire to burn Souls, and torment them eternally. Now suppose it were so, yet if they believe these Threatnings, they must believe that some terrible thing is signified by everlasting Burnings; and if Fire and Brimstone serve only for Metaphors to describe these Torments by, what will the real Sufferings of the Damned be! For the Spirit of God does not use to describe

scribe things by such Metaphors as are greater than the things themselves. And therefore let no bad Man encourage himself in Sin, because he does not know what the Punishments of the other World are; this should possess us with the greater Awe and Dread of them, since every thing in the other World, not only the Happiness, but the Miseries of it, will prove greater, not less than we expect.

Having thus shewed you under what Notions we are to consider Death, and what Wisdom we should learn from them, I proceed to the second thing, the Certainty of Death: *It is appointed to Men once to die*, it remains, it is reserved, and as it were laid up for them.

I believe no Man will desire a Proof of this which he sees with his Eyes; one Generation succeeds another, and those who live longest, at last yield to the fatal Stroke,
There

There were Two Men indeed, *Enoch* and *Elias*, who did not die, as Death signifies a Separation of Soul and Body, but were translated to Heaven without dying; but this is the general Law for Mankind, from which none are excepted, but those whom God, by his sovereign Authority, and for wise Reasons, thinks fit to except; which have been but Two since the Creation, and will be no more till *Christ* comes to Judge the World: For then *St. Paul* tells us, those who are alive at *Christ's* Second coming, shall not die, but shall be changed, 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. Behold I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, at the last Trump; for the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This is such a Change, as is equivalent to Death, it puts us in the same State with those

those who are dead, and at the last Judgment rise again.

But let me now shew you what use to make of this Consideration, That we must all certainly die; and it is this should teach us frequently to think of Death, to keep it always in our Eye and View, and to make it our main Concern and Care, that we may die happily, and that depends upon our living well; and nothing hath such a powerful Influence upon the good Government of our Lives, as the Thought of Death. And the very first thing we ought to do in this World, after we come to Years of Understanding, should be to prepare for Death, that whenever Death comes we may be ready for it. And this leads me to consider in the

Third Place, the Time of our Death, which is once, but when, uncertain.

Now

Now when I say, the Time of our Death is uncertain; I need not tell you that I mean only it is uncertain to us; that is, that no Man knows when he shall die; for God certainly knows when we shall die, because he knows all Things, and therefore with respect to the Foreknowledge of God, the Time of our Death is certain.

Thus much is certain as to Death, that we must all die; and it is certain also, that Death is not far off, because we know our Lives are very short: Before the Flood, Men lived many hundred Years: But it is a great while now since the Psalmist observed, that the ordinary Term of Human Life had very narrow Bounds set to it, *The Days of our Years, are Threescore Years and Ten; and if by reason of Strength they be Fourscore Years, yet is their Strength Labour and Sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away,* 90 Psal. 10. There

There are some Exceptions from this general Rule; but this is the ordinary Period of Human Life, when it is spun out to the greatest Length, and therefore within this Term we may reasonably expect it; for in the ordinary Course of Nature, our Bodies are not made to last much longer.

Thus far we are certain; but then how much of this time we shall run out, how soon, or how late we shall die, we know not, for we see no Age exempted from Death; some expire in the Cradle, and at their Mothers Breasts; others in the Heat and Vigour of Youth; others survive to a decrepit Age, and it may be, follow their whole Family to their Graves. Death very often surprizeth us, when we least think of it, without giving us any warning of its approach; and that is Proof enough, that the Time of our Death is unknown, and uncertain

certain to us, that we know not when we shall die, whether this Night, or to Morrow, or twenty Years hence. There is no need to prove this, but only to mind you of it, and to acquaint you, what wise use you are to make of it.

First, This shews how unreasonable it is to flatter our selves with the Hope of long Life: The Truth is, the time of dying is so uncertain, the ways of dying so infinite, so unseen, so casual and fortuitous to us, that instead of promising our selves long Life, no wise Man will promise himself a Week; nor venture any thing of great Moment and Consequence upon it. For what Man would be fond of laying up great Treasures on Earth, who remembers, *That this Night his Soul may be taken from him, and then whose shall all these Things be?* What Man would place his Happiness in such Enjoyments, which for ought
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he knows, he may be taken from To Morrow? Our stay is generally uncertain here, we have no Lease of our Lives, but may be turned out of our earthly Tenement at pleasure.

Secondly, Since the Time of our Death is so unknown and uncertain to us, we ought always to live in Expectation of it; to be so far from promising ourselves long Life, that we should not promise our selves a Day: And the Reason first is plain and necessary, because we are not sure of a Day; not that we are to live under the perpetual Fear of Dying, but to live as a wise Man would do, who knows, not that he *must*, but that he *may* die to Day.

That is, to be always prepared for Death; not to defer our Repentance, and Return to God, one Moment; not to commit any wilful Sin, lest Death should surprize us in it;

it; not to be Slothful and Negligent, but to be always employed in our Master's Business, to be always upon our Watch, always in Expectation of Death, and always prepared for it.

Thirdly, Since the Time of our Death is so very uncertain, it concerns us to improve our present Time, to the best and wisest Purposes, and there is a plain necessary Reason why we should do this; because our Lives are uncertain, and therefore no Time is ours but what is present. The Time past was ours, but that is gone, and we can never recal it, nor live it over again: If we have spent it well, we shall find it ours still in our Account, but it is no longer our Time to live and act in; the Time to come may be ours, and may not, because we know not whether we shall live to it, and therefore we cannot reckon upon it; the Time present is
ours,

ours, and that is the only Time that is ours; and therefore if we will improve our Time, we must improve our present Time; we must live to Day, and not put off living to Morrow.

Fourthly, Since our Lives are so very uncertain, this ought to cure an anxious Care and Sollicitude, for Times to come. We may live many Years, though our Lives are uncertain, and therefore a provident Care becomes us: But we may die also very quickly, and why then should we disturb our selves with To Morrow's Cares, much less with some remoter Possibilities? And,

Fifthly, For the same Reason, we ought not to be greatly afraid of Men, nor to put our Trust and Confidence in them, because their Lives are very uncertain; They may not be able to hurt us, when we are most apprehensive of Danger from

from them; nor to help us, when we need them most. Whatever Power Men may have to hurt while they live, they can do no hurt when they are dead; and their Lives are so very uncertain, that we may be quickly eased of these Fears. The same may be said with respect to Hope and Confidence in Men, tho' their Word and Promise were always sacred, yet their Lives are uncertain.

Sixthly, For a Conclusion of this Argument, the uncertainty of our Lives, is a great Motive to constant Watchfulness, to an early and preferring Piety; but to know when we shall die, could serve no good End, but would increase the Wickedness of Mankind, which is too great already; which is a sufficient Vindication of the Wisdom of God, in leaving the Time of Death unknown and uncertain to us.

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The next thing to be considered, is, That we must die but once: *It is appointed for Men once to die*: This is a certain Rule in general, That as all Men must die *once*, so they must die *but once*; which needs no other Proof, but the daily Experience and Observation of Mankind.

But that which I intend by it is this; that once dying, determines our State and Condition for ever, and the only Time we have *to finish the Work God has given us to do*, is while we live in this World; when we put off these manly Bodies, we must not return to them again, to act over a new Part in this World, and to correct the Errors and Mis-carriages of our former Lives; but Death translates us to an immutable and unchangeable State, *In the Place where the Tree falleth there it shall be*, Eccles. i. 3. This is a Consideration of very great Moment,

ment, and should teach us of what mighty Consequence it is to die well, that Death may find us well disposed, and well prepared for another World. This ought to be the Work and Business of our whole Lives, to prepare for Death, which comes but *once*, but that *once* is for Eternity; for such as we are when we die, such we shall continue for ever; and therefore it is the last Scene of our Lives, which determines our future State.

And should not this make us very jealous and watchful over our selves, to take heed that we do not live or die in the actual Commission of any known or wilful Sin, for there is no Repentance, and therefore no Pardon in the next World. And is not this a good Reason why we should begin to serve God betimes, and take all Opportunities of doing Good, since we have only a short Life to work in for Eternity? Death
puts

puts an end to our working for the other World: Nothing can turn to our Account at the Day of Judgment, but the Good we do while we live here: For this only we shall receive our Reward, and that particularly to the Increase and wise Improvement of our Talents, and therefore we must take care to do all the Good we can while we live.

And since Death puts an end to our Account, methinks a dying Bed is a little of the latest to begin it; for this is to begin, just where we must end. The Account of our Lives, is the Account of the Good or Evil we have done while we lived: And what Account can a dying Man give of this, who has spent his whole Life in Sin and Wickedness? If he must be judged according to what he hath done in the Body, how sad is his Account, and how impossible is it for him to mend

mend it now? For when he is just a dying, it is too late for him to begin to live; his time of Work is over, almost as perfectly over as if he were dead, and therefore his Account is finish'd, and he must expect his Reward, according to what he has already done.

No, you'll say, he may still repent of his Sins, and a true Penitent shall find Mercy even at his last Gasp. Now I readily grant, that all true Penitents shall be sav'd whensoever they truly repent; but it is hard to think, that any dying Sorrows, or the dying Vows and Resolutions of Sinners, shall be accepted by *God* for true Repentance: The Gospel makes Holiness of Life as necessary a Condition of Salvation, as true Repentance, and frequently declares, That we shall be rewarded according to our Works; and we have as much Reason to believe one as the other; and if we

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believe the Gospel, we must believe them both ; and then Repentance and a Holy Life are both necessary to Salvation ; and then the dying Sorrows of Sinners, who have lived very wicked Lives, and are past mending them now, cannot be true Saving Repentance. If Sorrow for Sin, without a Holy Life, carry Men to Heaven, then I'm sure Holiness is not necessary, then Men may *see God without Holiness* ; and then the Promises of Pardon to Repentance (if this dying Sorrow be true Repentance) overthrows the necessity of an Holy Life, and the necessity of an Holy Life contradicts the Promises of Pardon to such Penitents, and then either one or both of them must be false. It does not become me to prejudge the final State of dying Penitents ; but thus much I may safely say, that if God accept of such a Death-Bed Repentance, which cannot produce the actual

actual Fruits of Righteousness; it is more than he has promised, and more than he has given us Authority to preach; and we should consider what infinite Hazards we run by such Delays of Repentance, that we cannot be saved by the express Terms of the Gospel; but if we be saved, we must be saved by an unpromised and uncountenanced Grace and Mercy; which, how good soever God be, we have no occasion to rely on. This, I know, will be thought very severe, but I cannot help it: It may terrify dying Sinners, but there is less Danger in that, than in nursing Men up in the deluding Hopes of a *Death-Bed Repentance*, which renders all the Arguments and Motives to an Holy Life ineffectual; and, I fear, eternally destroys as many as trust in it. And so I pass to the

Fourth and Last Particular, viz. The natural Fear and Terror of

Death, or our natural Aversion to it, and how they may be allay'd and sweetned. Death is commonly and very truly called the King of Terrors, as being the most formidable thing to Human Nature; the Law of Life, and the natural Principle of Self-Preservation, begets in all Men a natural Fear of Dying: We must not expect wholly to conquer our Aversion to Death; St. Paul himself did not desire *to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be swallowed up of Life.* But tho' this natural Aversion to Death cannot be wholly conquered, it may be extremely lessened and brought next to nothing, by the certain Belief and Expectation of a Glorious Immortality; and therefore the only way to arm our selves against these natural Fears of Dying, is to confirm our selves in this Belief. That Death does not put an end to us, That our Souls shall survive it.

a State of Bliss and Happiness, when our Bodies shall rot in the Graves ; and that these Mortal Bodies themselves, shall at the Sound of the last Trump rise again out of the Dust Immortal and Glorious. A Man who believes and expects this, can have no Reason to be afraid of Death ; nay, he has great Reason not to fear *Death*, and that will reconcile him to the Thoughts of it, tho' he trembles a little under the Weakness and Aversion of Nature.

Besides the natural Aversion to Death, most Men have contracted a great Fondness and Passion for this World, and that makes them so unwilling to leave it : Whatever Glorious Things they hear of another World, they see what is to be had in this, and they like it so well, that they do not expect to mend themselves, but if they were at their Choice, wou'd stay where they are, and this is a double Death

to them, to be snatched away from their admired Enjoyments, and to leave whatever they love and delight in behind them ; and there is no Remedy that I know of, for these Men to cure their Fear of Death, but only to rectify their mistaken Opinion of Things, to open their Eyes to see the Vanity of this World, and the brighter and more dazling Glories of the next ; to live in this World upon the hopes of unseen Things ; to accustom our selves to the Work, and to the Pleasures of Heaven ; to praise and adore the Great Maker and Redeemer of the World ; to mingle our selves with the Heavenly Choirs, and possess our very Fancies and Imaginations with the Glory and Happiness of seeing God, and the Blessed Jesus, of dwelling in his immediate Presence, of conversing with Saints and Angels. In short, a Life of Faith, as it is our Victory over this World, so

so it is our Victory over Death too ; it disarms it of all its Fears and Terrors, it raises our Hearts so much above this World, that we are very well pleased to get rid of these Bodies which keep us here, and to leave them in the Grave, in hopes of a Blessed Resurrection.

But, *Lastly*, The most tormenting Fears of Death are owing to a sense of Guilt, which indeed are rather a Fear of Judgment than of Death, or a Fear of Death as it sends us to Judgment. Wicked Men, who never concerned themselves with the Thoughts of God and another World, while they were in Health, many times a dangerous Sickness, which gives them a nearer View of Death and Judgment, awakens their Consciences, and overwhelms them with the unsupportable Terror of future Vengeance. Then they begin to lament their ill-spent Lives, and to tremble before

fore the Just and Righteous Judge; now they are mighty earnest for Comfort; the Minister who was the Subject of their Drollery before, is sent for in great hast, and it is expected from him, that he should lull their Consciences asleep, and send them quietly into another World, to receive their Doom there.

Now it is very fitting to let these Men know, that there is no possible way to prevent these Fears when they come to die, then while they are well, by *giving all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure*; by living such Holy and Innocent Lives in time of Health, that their Consciences may not condemn them in the Hour of Sicknes or Death, and then they *shall have Confidence towards God.*

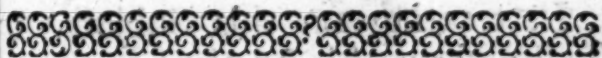
For the Conclusion of this Discourse, I shall only observe in a few Words, that it must be the Business of our whole Lives to prepare for
DEATH:

DEATH: Our Accounts must be always ready, because we know not how soon we may be called to give an Account of our Stewardship; we must be always upon our watch, as not knowing what Hour our *Lord* will come. A good Man who has taken care all his Life to please *God*, has little more to do when he sees *Death* approaching, than to take leave of his Friends, to bless his Children, to support and comfort himself with the Hopes of Immortal Life, and a Glorious Resurrection, and to resign up his Spirit into the Hands of *God*, and of his *Saviour*: His Lamp is full of Oyl, and always burning, tho' it may need a little trimming when the Bridegroom comes; some new Acts of *Faith* and *Hope*, and such devout Passions as are proper to be exercised at our leaving the World, and going to *God*; but when the Bridegroom is at the Door, it is too late

with the Foolish Virgins to buy Oyl for our Lamps ; unless we be ready when the Bridegroom comes to enter in with him to the Marriage, the Door will be shut against us. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

Some Men talk of preparing for Death, as if it were a thing that could be done in two or three Days, and that the proper time of doing it were a little before they die ; but I know no other Preparation for Death but living well ; and thus we must every Day prepare for Death, and then we shall be well prepared when Death comes ; that is, we shall be able to give a good Account of our Lives, and of the Improvement of our Talents, and he who can do this, is well prepared to die, and to go to Judgment ; but he who has spent all his Days wickedly, whatever care

care he may take when he comes to die to prepare himself for it, it is certain, he can never prepare a good Account of his past Life, and all his other Preparations are little worth.



DISCOURSE II.

OF A

Future Judgment.

From Dr. SHERLOCK.

HAVING shewn the Importance of a due Preparation for *DEATH*, the next Thing to be considered, is *JUDGMENT*; for so the Apostle tells us, after *Death* the *Judgment*, 9. Heb. 27. And a very grave and serious Thought it is, if ever Men will be

be serious: For nothing can be of greater Concernment to us, than a *Future Judgment*, which will determine our final State and Condition to Eternity.

In treating on this Subject, I shall observe this Method:

First, Enquire what Assurance we have of a *Future Judgment*.

Secondly, Who shall be our Judge.

Thirdly, The Persons who shall be Judged. And,

Fourthly, For what we shall be Judged.

In treating of *Death*, there was no need to prove, that all Men must Die, for this is too visible to be denied; but *Judgment* is not seen, nor can it be seen, because it is not yet; could Men indeed look into the other World, they would soon be convinced, by the different State of good and bad Men there, that

that *God* has appointed a Day for Judgment, but that is an invisible State to us, and the Thoughts of Judgment are so uneasy to bad Men now, that they are very unwilling to believe it; and this makes it necessary to lay the Foundation of all in the Proof of a *Future Judgment*.

Now there are two ways of proving this: *First*, By the Principles of Reason; *Secondly*, By Revelation. By Reason we can prove, that *God* will Judge the World, as that signifies that *God* will call all Men to an Account for their Actions, and that he will reward Good Men, and punish the Wicked in the next World. This the Heathens themselves discovered by the Light of Nature; they talked very much of the Infernal Judges, and of the Rewards and Punishments of Good and Bad Men after Death; and therefore in this Sense did believe a *Future Judgment*: But yet the Reve-

Revelation of the Gospel has given us a more plain and undeniable Assurance of this, and has discovered something more than the Light of Nature could discover. The Light of Nature and Reason may satisfy us, as it did the Heathens, that God will reward Good Men, and punish the Wicked in the next World; but it could not tell us, That God had appointed a General Day of Judgment, wherein all the Dead shall rise again out of their Graves, and re-assume their Bodies, and be summoned to Judgment; it could not tell us who shall be our Judge, with what Glory and Majesty he shall appear, and with what Pomp, and Awful, and Terrible Solemnities He shall Judge us. The World knew nothing of this before the Gospel was preached; for it depends wholly upon the Will and Pleasure of God, and therefore can be known only by Revelation. I

I shall begin with the Proofs from Reason, and here I might shew, that Man is by Nature an accountable Creature, That the Essential Differences between Good and Evil, and the Natural Notions we have of God, and the External Appearances of Providence, do all prove a *Future Judgment*; but I shall rather insist upon the Natural Presages of Conscience, and shew, that even from these a *Future Judgment* may be fairly proved. All Men do naturally expect to be Judged, to be rewarded or punished for the Good or Evil they do; and this is a strong Natural Presumption that God will Judge the World. Let bad Men be never so powerful and prosperous, tho' they fear no Hurt from Men, nor any Change and Alteration of their Fortunes, yet the Sense of Guilt distracts and terrifies them with the Fears of an Unseen and Almighty Vengeance;
and

and tho' Good Men suffer very hard Things from the World, and have no prospect of better Usage here, yet their Consciences speak Peace to them, and support them with great Hopes; and therefore, unless these natural Hopes and Fears deceive us, Good Men shall certainly be rewarded by God, and Bad Men punished, either in this World, or the next, or in both.

We may consider farther, that those Hopes and Fears of Good and Bad Men, give a Natural Confirmation to all those other Arguments, which I have already hinted for the Proof of a *Future Judgment*. To shew this in a few Words:

1st, This proves a Natural Sense in all Men, that they are accountable Creatures, and shall be called to an Account for their Actions; for unless Men were sensible of this, why

why should their Consciences acquit or condemn them? Why should they Judge themselves, but in Relation to some Higher Tribunal, which will certainly Judge them? Especially when the Consciences of Bad Men do not only condemn, but threaten them; and the Consciences of Good Men, do not only acquit and absolve, but promise a Reward; for they can neither punish nor reward themselves.

2dly, This proves the Natural Sense we have of the Essential Difference between Good and Evil, and that what is Good deserves a Reward, and what is Evil deserves Punishment; because Good Men expect a Reward for the Good they do, and Bad Men fear Punishment when they have done Evil; which shews a Natural Sense of the just Merits and Defects both of Good and Evil, and that they shall receive their just Rewards.

3dly,

3dly, This proves also that Natural Sense Mankind have, that God is the Supreme and Sovereign Lord and Judge of the World, and will Judge Mankind; for there is no other Tribunal which all Mankind can be accountable to. The common Sense of Human Nature must respect the Universal Lord and Judge of the World, who has a Natural Right to Govern and Judge Mankind. He who made us, imprinted this Sense upon our Minds; for what is Natural, is owing only to the Author of Nature; and therefore these Natural Hopes and Fears can only relate to the Government and Judgment of our Maker, and Natural Lord; and then they must prove that God will Judge us, that he will Reward or Punish us according to our Works; Nay,

4thly, This proves that Natural Sense Men have of a just Providence which

which governs this World at present; for tho' these Natural Hopes and Fears do not give Men any assurance that they shall be Rewarded or Punished in this World, as they deserve; yet a good Conscience, especially some great and eminent Vertues, give Good Men great Hopes in *God*, and a secure Trust and Dependance on his Providence, even in this Life; and a great Sense of Guilt makes Men afraid of present Vengeance; tho' *God* may think fit to delay the Punishment of Bad Men till the next World, yet a guilty Conscience never thinks it self safe here: So that if there be any force in these Arguments, the Accountableness of Human Nature, the Essential Differences of Good and Evil, the Natural Notions of *God's* Dominion and Sovereignty, and that just Providence which governs this World at present; to prove a *Future Judgment*: They all re-

receive Strength and Confirmation, from the Natural Hopes and Fears of Good and Bad Men, which are a Natural Prefage of Judgment. And this may suffice for the first Thing proposed, what Natural Evidence we have of a Judgment to come.

Let us now consider the Scripture Proofs of it, and some few Texts will be sufficient for this Purpose: This is expressly affirmed by St. Paul, *17 Acts 31. That God hath appointed a Day in the which he will Judge the World in Righteousness.* Our Saviour tells us, that we shall be Judged, and in order to it, that *the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels; and then shall he reward every Man according to his Works,* St. Matt. 16. 27. And in St. Matt. 31. 25, &c. he gives a lively Description of the Future Judgment: *When the Son of Man shall come in*

his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory: And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats; and he shall set the Sheep on his Right-hand, but the Goats on the Left. And then he Judges them, and pronounces their final Doom and Sentence, according to their Works, as it follows in that Place. It were easie to turn you to many Texts to this Purpose, as every one knows who is acquainted with the Scripture; but there is no need of it, these few are so express, that if we believe the Gospel, we must believe that we shall be Judged.

Having thus proved the Certainty of a Future Judgment, both from Reason and Scripture, let us next consider who shall be our Judge: That Man whom he hath ordained, whereof

whereof he hath given assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead; where there are Two Things to be consider'd: First, The Person who is to Judge us. And Secondly, What Assurance we have, that he shall be our Judge.

First, The Person who is to Judge us: That Man whom he hath ordained, that is, the Man CHRIST JESUS: For thus both Christ and his Apostles assure us, that God hath appointed him to be Judge of the World: The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son, Joh. 5. 22. Thus St. Peter assures Cornelius, concerning CHRIST, He commanded us to preach unto the People, and to testify that it is He which was ordained by God, to be the Judge of Quick and Dead, Acts 10. 42. But there is no need to multiply Texts in so plain a Case; it is of more Concernment

cernment to inquire, why *Christ*, who is the Eternal Son of God, and a God incarnate, when he is spoke of as Judge of the World, is most usually described as a *Man*, or the *Son of Man*? Thus he is that *Man whom God hath ordained; and the Son of Man*: Nay, *Christ* himself tells us, *For this reason God hath given him Authority to execute Judgment, because he is the Son of Man*, John 5. 27.

Now the Reason why our *Saviour* is described as a *Man*; and the *Son of Man*, when he comes to Judgment, is, because he shall visibly appear in Human Nature to Judge the World; and therefore will be, and will appear as much a *Man*, as when he dwelt on Earth, tho' he will appear also more like a *God*; And this seems the true Reason why our *Saviour* so often calls himself the *Son of Man*, not as some imagine with respect to the mean
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Circumstances of his Appearance in the World; for this Phrase, *The Son of Man*, no where, in Scripture, relates to such an External Meanness and Poverty, as distinguishes one Man from another; but it either signifies no more than a Man, or it respects the common Weaknesses of Human Nature; and when this Name is applied to any particular Persons, it is never used of mean Men, but always of Princes or Prophets: But by this Title of *the Son of Man*, our Saviour gives us to understand, that he is that Great and Extraordinary Person, known by the Name of *the Son of Man* in *Daniel's* Visions, whom God hath ordained to be the Lord and Judge of the World.

And it is very fitting and necessary that this *Son of Man*, the Saviour of the World, should be their Judge also, and that upon Two Accounts.

1. Because the Authority to Judge is essential to the Notion and Authority of a *Saviour*: To *save Sinners*, signifies to *save them from their Sins*; which is the true Interpretation of the Name *JESUS*, *St. Matt.* 1. 20. And to save them from their Sins, is to deliver them from the Punishment of Sin; that is, from the Wrath of *God*, from the Curse of the Law, from Death and Hell, to raise them from the Dead, and to bestow immortal Life on them: Now there are several Acts must concur to perfect this Salvation, but the last concluding and finishing Act, is *Judgment*. And He only is a complete and perfect Saviour, who has Authority to Judge, to Pardon, and to Reward. And if *Christ* cannot do this for us, whatever other Benefits we receive by his Ministry and Death, he is not a complete and perfect Saviour; for he does not actually save

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us, unless he hath Power and Authority to Judge us; that is, finally to absolve us from all our Sins, and to bestow Heaven on us. Which shews, that the Saviour of Sinners must be their Judge, because we are not actually saved till we are finally judged.

2. But besides the Nature of the Thing, that our *Saviour* must be our Judge, that is, must actually save us, there is very great Reason it should be so, because this gives great Authority to his Law and Counsels, to remember that our Law-giver will be our Judge; that he who came into the World in Human Nature to declare the Will of *God* to us, shall come again to Judge us by that Gospel which he preached; and because this gives great Credit to his Promises and Threatnings, when they are made by our Judge himself, who has Authority to execute them: Has *Christ*

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of a Future JUDGMENT. 51

promised Pardon of Sin to all true Penitents? Has he promised to raise our Dead Bodies out of the Grave, Immortal and Glorious, to bestow a Crown and Kingdom on us? Then we may depend on it, that he will do what he has promised; for he has both Authority and Power to do it.

And have not all impenitent Sinners as much Reason to expect that *Christ* will certainly execute that everlasting Vengeance on them which he has threatned? For he is the Judge of the World, who has Power and Authority to do it, and has declared that he will do it, and then we have reason to take his Word for it.

But *Secondly*, It is very fitting, that the *Man Christ Jesus*, who is the Saviour, should be the Judge of the World; and that upon these Accounts. 1. This is a very fitting Reward of his Humiliation and

Suffering. It is but reasonable that all the Sons of Men should come before his Throne, and submit to his Judgment, who disdain'd not for our sakes to stand at the Tribunal of Wicked Men, and receive the Sentence of Condemnation. To this purpose are those Expressions of St. Paul, *Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.* *Tho' he was in the Form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God; yet he made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Man: And being form'd in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross: Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name: That at the Name of JESUS every Knee should bow.* Secondly, It gives great Advantage to the Future Judgment, that the Son of Man is the Judge

Judge of Mankind: For his very Appearance to Judge the World, will convince all Men of the Justice, Equity, and Compassion of the last Judgment. What a joyful Sight will it be unto all sincere Penitents, when they shall see their Advocate become their Judge, and none but their tender, compassionate Saviour, he who knows all the Frailties and Infirmities of their Nature, sitting on the Throne of Glory? But then consider on the other Hand, what a terrible Thing will it be to Sinners, to be condemned by the *Man Christ Jesus*, the Saviour of the World? Well may they then call upon the *Rocks to cover*, and the *Mountains to hide them*; since the *Presence of the Lamb* will be infinitely more dreadful, than the Presence of the fiercest Lion. For such must be Self-Condernation; they must feel all the Agonies of Guilt and Despair. What

Fury and Passion will accompany their tumultuous Thoughts, is not to be expressed by Words; and I pray God none of us may ever feel it. But *Thirdly*, Another Thing which makes it so necessary that *the Son of Man* should Judge the World, is, That he will be a visible Judge, and will appear in a visible Glory, and as visibly Judge the World, as any Earthly Prince or Judge, when he ascends the Judgment Seat. Who can possibly conceive the Joy and Exultation of that Day, when Good Men shall see their Lord coming in the Clouds of Heaven, attended with Myriads of Angels, cloathed with a Human Body, but Bright and Glorious as the Sun; a Body which still retains the Marks of his Sufferings, and the Tokens of his Love! O joyful Day, when this Royal Bridegroom shall come in the Glory of his Father, to meet his Spouse the Church,

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to conduct her to his Father's House, there to see, and there to partake in his Glory, and never to part more.

But then on the other Hand, consider, I beseech you, what a terrible Sight it will be to Bad Men, who have laughed at the Fable of a *Crucified JESUS*, and mocked at a *Future Judgment*? How can they appear before him as their Judge, whom they would not have for a Saviour? What Account can they give of their Actions, who never expected to be called to an Account for them? What Plea can they make for themselves, who would never believe, who would never be perswaded? How shall they bear his Presence, and yet whither can they fly from him? When he condemns them, to whom can they appeal from the Judge, and the *Saviour* of the World? Wretches that they are, who would never believe, never think of this Day,

and now they must be condemned by the *Saviour* of the World.

Let these Thoughts then make a deep Impression upon our Minds before that Day comes: Let us remember that *the Son of Man* will be our Judge; he who laid down his Life for us, he who now invites us to Repentance, he who now promises Pardon and Forgiveness to true Penitents: Let this teach us to reverence his Laws, to imitate his Example, to put our whole Trust and Confidence in his Merits and Intercession, that, *when he cometh again in his Glorious Majesty to Judge both the Quick and the Dead, we may rise with him unto Life immortal*; as our Church teaches us to pray. And this brings me in the Third Place, to consider who are to be Judged, and they are the World, or all Mankind. No Man who believes a *Future Judgment*, makes any doubt of this, but

but that all shall be Judged: For if any, why not all? We are all alike *God's* Creatures, we are all equally accountable to him; and tho' we have very different Talents, yet we have all some Talent or other to improve for our Master's Use: Whether we be Rich and Great, High or Low, Old or Young, one with another; and therefore I shall not go about to convince any Man that he is to be Judged as well as the rest of Mankind, but shall rather enquire in the

4th Place, What we are to be Judged for? And the general Answer to this is plain, *That we must all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad,* 2 Cor. 5. 10. that is, we shall be Judged for all the Good and Evil we have done. This is obvious to all Men, and

acknowledged by all who believe a Judgment; and it may be thought impertinent to prove, that we shall be Judged for such or such particular Crimes, when it is universally confessed, that we shall be Judged for all: For all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; for our most secret Sins, as well as open Impieties: And there is no reason to think it should be otherwise, since our most secret Sins are visible to God: *All things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13. And when God knows our most secret Sins, why should he not Judge us for them? And if God will Judge us for all our most secret Sins, how little will it avail us to conceal our Sins from Men? We may indeed by this means escape present Sin and Punishment; but eternal Shame, eternal Torment, will be our Portion; and are we more afraid of being re-

reproach'd by Men, than of being reproached by *God*, and by our own Consciences? than of being exposed to Shame in the general Assembly of Men and Angels, when *God* shall bring to light all the hidden Works of Darkneſs? Are we more afraid of ſome Punishments in our Bodies or Eſtates, which Human Laws and Judicatures can inflict on us, than we are of Hell, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched?*

Having ſhewn for what we are to be judged; *viz.* our Thoughts, Words and Actions, our moſt ſecret as well as open Sins, it now concerns us to enquire by what Rule *Chriſt* will judge the World. As to Heathens who never heard of *Chriſt*, and never had the Goſpel preached to them, we know not certainly how *God* will deal with them; leaving them therefore to the Infinite Mercies of God, which are over all
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his Works, it more concerns us to enquire by what Rule *Christ* will judge us who have had the Gospel preached to us.

Now in general, *St. Paul* tells us, *God will judge the Secrets of Men by Christ Jesus*, according to my Gospel, 2 *Rom.* 16. that is, by the Gospel which I preach : The Gospel of *Our Saviour* is the Rule whereby we shall be judged, by which our Lives and Actions shall be examined ; and as the Gospel acquits or condemns any Man, so he shall be acquitted or condemned at the Last Judgment, so that we need not go far to know what our Doom shall be ; we need not search into the secret and hidden Counsels of *God* ; the Gospel lies open before us, and tho' we cannot find our Names there, we may read our Sentence ; *For God will render to every Man according to his Deeds.* To them who by *patient Continuance*
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in well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh Good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no Respect of Persons with God, 2 Rom. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. What this Good, and this Evil is, the Gospel acquaints us; and if we do what the Gospel commands, we shall be acquitted and rewarded; if we do what it forbids, we shall be condemned. So that we certainly know, that all wicked Men, who live in the wilful Commission of any known Sin, shall be finally condemned: Christ will at that Day profess unto them, I never knew you, Depart from

from me ye that work Iniquity,
7 Mat. 23.

Having thus largely discoursed concerning a future Judgment, I need not mind you of what Concernment it is, to know what Sentence *Christ* will pass on us at that Day; whether, *Come ye blessed of my Father*: Or, *Go ye cursed into Everlasting Fire*. For if we must be Happy or Miserable for ever, how can we content our selves to live in doubt and suspense, which of these shall be our Portion? What a Hell is this, to live in perpetual fear of Hell? How can we sleep without dreaming of Lakes of Fire and Brimstone, without the frightful Apparitions of Damned Spirits! What a transporting Foretast would it give us of the Joys of Heaven, to read our Names written in the Book of Life! To see a Crown, a bright and glorious Crown prepared for us! But how shall we know this?
Who

Who shall search the Records of Heaven for us? The Answer is plain; we need not ascend up into Heaven for it, we have the counter-part of those Records in our own Breasts. For as St. *John* tells us, *If our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all Things: Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God,* 1 John 3. 20, 21. that is, If our Heart or Conscience condemn us, then God will condemn us, for he knows more of us than our own Consciences know, He knows us better than we know ourselves; and if we know so much Wickedness by our selves, that we cannot but condemn our selves, (tho' every Man is a favourable Judge of himself) God who knows a great deal more of us, must condemn us also: But if our Conscience condemn us not, if it acquit and absolve, *then have we Confidence towards*

towards God, a great and sure hope in God's Mercy, that he will not condemn us.

Thus we see, how we may know, what our Sentence shall be at the Day of *Judgment*; if we listen to the Judgment of our Consciences, and our Consciences absolutely condemn us, we may certainly expect that God will condemn us also: If our Consciences do not condemn us, then shall we certainly be pardoned and rewarded by God himself. And should not this teach us to reverence the Judgment of Conscience as a Divine Sentence; not to provoke our Consciences to condemn us; to obey their Admonitions, and to reform at their Rebukes and Censures; What could Sinners think, should they hear themselves condemned by God, every time they commit a known and wilful Sin? And yet Conscience is the Tribunal of God, judges for God, and condemns

demns us in *God's* Name, and by his Authority, and *God* will confirm and execute its Sentence, and therefore Conscience is a very venerable Judge. And O the Joy and Triumph of a good Conscience, which speaks Peace to us, and gives us a secure Hope in God; which gives us the joyful Prospect of Eternal Rewards, of a Crown, and a Kingdom, of those Rivers of Pleasure which are at *God's* Right Hand! When with St. *Paul*, we can say, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finish'd my Course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge will give me at that Day,* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

This is an happy State indeed, a perfect and full Assurance of Hope, which makes good Men impatiently long for the Day of Judgment, to be put into the Possession of so great an Happiness; and there is no
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way to have this, but from the Testimony of our own Conscience: And Conscience will never give this Testimony to us, without a tryed and experienced Virtue, till the Flesh be subdued to the Spirit; till our Minds are refined and purified, and our Conversations adorned with all Divine and Heavenly Graces. Every new Conquest we gain over this World; every new Degree of Strength and Vigour in serving God; our Increase in Charity and all good Works, will add new Degrees to our Hope, our Consciences will give the more ample Testimony to us, and that gives us greater Confidence towards God, which will make us joyfully respect that *Blessed Hope, and Glorious Appearance of the Great God and our Saviour, JESUS CHRIST.*

DISCOURSE III.

O F

H E A V E N.

*From Dr. SHERLOCK, Bishop
BEVERIDGE, &c.*

THE serious Consideration of
DEATH and JUDGMENT, is
absolutely necessary to the Wise and
Religious Government of our Lives,
That we must Die, disparages all
present Enjoyments; and if we suf-
fer such Thoughts to sink into our
Souls, they naturally moderate our
Affections, and set Bounds to our
Use of them. That we shall be
Judged, and Rewarded or Punish-
ed according to our Works, is a ne-
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what we do, and what Account we can give of our Actions, when God comes to judge the World, which will possess our Souls with a Holy and Religious Fear of God, and make us wise for Eternity. This is the very same Argument, which the Belief of a future State suggests to us: *To deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; looking for that Blessed Hope, and glorious Appearance of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought we to be in all Holy Conversation and Godliness?* And therefore, *knowing the Terror of the Lord, we perswade Men.*

But tho' a future Judgment, and the Rewards and Punishments of the next Life, is the very same Argument; for the whole of the Argument is, That Good Men shall
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be Rewarded, and the Wicked Punished; yet a particular Consideration of *Heaven* or *Hell*, either makes it a new Argument, or gives new Force to it. The general Argument is, Rewards and Punishments: But this Argument differs according to the different Degrees of Rewards and Punishments; for the greatest Rewards and Punishments are always the greatest and most powerful Arguments. And therefore, after a Discourse of *Death* and *Judgment*, to give the full Strength and Force to the Argument, it will be of great Use to take as near a Prospect of the other World as we can; to contemplate the unconceivable Happiness of good Men, and the astonishing Miseries of the Damned, which is the greatest Argument that can be used, because the Happiness and the Miseries are the greatest.

Now

Now though we do not know enough of the other World, to gratify the Curiosity of Mankind, yet what *Our Saviour* hath revealed (which is all that can be known of it) is abundantly sufficient to raise our Hopes, and inflame our Desires, and awaken our Fears : For if that Account be true, which the Gospel gives us of the Happiness and Miseries of the next Life, it is the greatest Happiness, and the greatest Misery which Human Nature is capable of, as will appear from the following Descriptions.

And, *First*, Of HEAVEN ; which is a Place of Joy, and Bliss, and Happiness. And were it possible for me, to give you a View of the Glories of that Happy Place, nay, to draw but some of the darkest Shades of them, it would make you despise this World, and pity the Folly of Sinners, who gain this World with the loss of Heaven. But tho'

tho' we do not exactly know what it is, yet we know it is a great Happiness; so it is represented to us in Scripture, as a Kingdom, and a Crown, an Eternal Kingdom, and a never fading Crown; an Inheritance, a Rich and Glorious Inheritance, an Inheritance of the Saints in Light; it is Light, and Life, and Joy, Rivers of Pleasures, and Fulness of Joy, and Everlasting Pleasures: These are the greatest and best Things we know in this World, and these serve only for some faint Images of the Happiness of Heaven. To be sure, Heaven is all that it is said to be, and as much greater than all we yet know; it is a State of such Happiness, so far beyond any thing we ever experienced yet, that we cannot form any Notion or Idea of it; yet we know that there is such a Happiness; and we know in some measure wherein this Happiness consists.

For,

For, *First*, There we shall be delivered from all the Fears, and Sorrows, and Temptations of this World; where there is nothing but perfect Love and Peace, no cross Interests and Factions to contend with; no Storms to ruffle or discompose our Joy and Rest to Eternity; where there is no Pain, no Sickness, no Labour, no Care, to refresh the Weariness, or to repair the Decays of a mortal Body; not so much as the Image of Death, to interrupt our constant Enjoyment, where there is a perpetual Day, and an Eternal Calm, when our Souls shall attain that utmost Perfection of Knowledge and Virtue; where we shall be out of all Danger, and in a safe Harbour, and secure Retreat; when we shall enjoy the Rewards of all our Toil, and be vastly enriched with never fading Treasures. Where we shall lead a very different Life from what we led here,

here, when naked of all Earthly Matter, and wanting none of the Conveniences of our Mortal State, our Thoughts will be more vigorous and sprightly, we shall understand more clearly, and will more freely, and act more nimbly, expeditely, and unrestrainedly: Where our Faculties shall be enlarged, and fill'd up with their proper Objects; and the more enlarged they are, the more Happiness, Perfection, Satisfaction, and Enjoyment they must needs have; where we shall serve God, not with dull, and sleepy, and unaffecting Devotion; but with piercing Thoughts, with Life and Vigour, with Ravishment and Transport; where we shall live in the full Enjoyment of all Things that can make our Lives easie, pleasant, and happy. Where we shall lie in *Abraham's* Bosom, and tast of the Joys and Pleasures that are at God's Right Hand, and be Partakers

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takers of such Felicities, as no Eye upon Earth hath seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of any Man, who hath not enjoyed them, to conceive what they are. Where we shall enjoy the most happy Company imaginable; for as the Author to the Hebrews tells us, *ch. 12. v. 22, 23. We shall come to the general Assembly of the first-born, to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, to an innumerable Company of Angels, and to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant.*

First, We shall be with all the Saints in Heaven, and we shall not long be with them, but we shall know them. If the Three Disciples who were admitted to Christ's Transfiguration, knew Moses and Elias, whom they had never seen before, no doubt but we, being fully illuminated, and perfectly glorified in Heaven, shall know all the
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Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Saints and Martyrs; and therefore our Saviour says expressly, *St. Luke 12. 28.* That the Godly hereafter shall see *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God.* There we shall see and know exactly all the Blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, tho' never acquainted with them upon Earth. Nor shall we only know them, but we shall have more secret Converse and intimate Communion with them. Here a *Naxianzen* shall repeat the Embraces of his Beloved *Basil*; and *David* for ever enjoy his Dearest *Jonathan*; *St. John* his Elect and Virtuous Lady; and the pious Soul actually possess what *Socrates* could of old but wish for, namely, the intimate Converse of all those Brave Heroes and Renowned Worthies, who have gone thither before him. And we shall soon believe there will be most sweet Communion among the Saints in

Heaven, when we consider the important Phrase by which it is expressed, *St. Mat. 8. 11. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven. Sit down,* that is, as the Original imports, *they shall feast with them.* And this sure does not only denote their mutual Knowledge each of other, but also the highest Carelles of Love and Friendship, such as the Metaphor of sitting down and feasting is used in Scripture to denote. And sure this cannot but mightily enhance the Happiness of Heaven. *David* accounted the Saints of God, namely, good Men and Women, the most Excellent Persons here upon Earth, and delighted in nothing so much as their sweet Society. But in Heaven they shall be made perfect; there they shall be freed from all those Human Infirmities, Imperfections,

fections, and Misfortunes, which use to allay the Solace of their Conversation; and shall be adorned with all those Excellencies and Advantages, which are requisite to make their Society most pleasant and desirable.

2dly. *We shall come to an innumerable Company of Angels.* Now Angels are far more Glorious Creatures than the Saints; for their Countenance is like Lightning, and their Raiment white as Snow; and such pure, and spotless, and glorious Beings are they, as raise a mighty Splendor and Beauty all about them. And therefore how great must be the Pleasure of beholding them, of conversing, and continually Blessing and Praising God with them? But this is not all, for the Godly shall not only be, and converse with Saints and Angels, but

3dly. They shall be with Christ himself. Hence St. Paul describing

the Happines of the Godly in Heaven, tells us, *that they shall come to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant.* Now *Christ*, as Mediator, was *Man* as well as *God*: And it will be part of our Happines to be with him as *Man*. It was one of *St. Austin's* Three Famous Wishes, to see *Christ* in the *Flesh*; but it shall be our Happines in Heaven, not barely to see *Christ's* Body, but also to see that Glory God has adorned it with there. To this purpose is that Prayer of our Saviour, *St. John 17. 24. Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* We shall there see *Christ* sitting on the Right Hand of Power, highly exalted above *Seraphims* and *Cherubims*; and the sight of all this Glory will rejoyce us the more, because our Human Nature is glorified in him.

4thly.

4^{thly}. The Godly, by being with *Christ* in Heaven, shall also be with God himself; for lastly, we shall come to God the Judge of all. To enjoy the Company of *Saints* and *Angels*, and *Christ*, as Man, is Happiness great, beyond our utmost Imagination: But yet they are but as little Drops, if compared to that Ocean of Bliss, which will flow in to the Soul upon the Enjoyment of God himself. It was a noble Saying of *Luther's*, *That he had rather be in Hell, with God's Presence, than in Heaven without it.* Now if this Presence of God be able to convert even Hell it self into a kind of Heaven; the Enjoyment of this must certainly make Heaven become what it is stiled in Scripture, an *Heaven of Heavens*. This therefore is the Flower of our Joy, the Quintessence of Comfort, the Crown of Blessedness, and the very Soul of Heaven: For whilst we enjoy God,

we must needs enjoy all things. All that is good did at first flow from him, and is therefore certainly more eminently to be found in him, as in its Fountain and Original. All that can delight our Souls, or ravish our Hearts; all that is lovely and desirable, are here to be found in their greatest Perfections. Well then might the Psalmist say, *Psal. 16. 11. In thy Presence, O God, there is Fulness of Joy, and at thy right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* How Great, how Ravishing and Transporting Pleasures these are, we cannot tell, because we never yet felt them; our dull Devotions, our imperfect Conceptions of God in this World, cannot help us to guess what the Joys of Heaven are; we know not how the Sight of God, how the Thoughts of him will pierce our Souls; with what Extasies and Raptures we shall sing the Song of the Lamb; with what melting Affections

ons perfect Souls shall embrace ;
what Glories and Wonders we shall
there see and know : But whatever
Expectations we have of the un-
known Happiness of the other
World, the Enjoyment of it will as
much exceed our biggest Expectati-
ons, as other things usually fall be-
low them ; that we shall be forced
to confess with the Queen of *Sheba*,
when she saw *Solomon's* Glory, That
not the half of it was told her. And
it is some Encouragement to us, that
the Happiness of Heaven is too big
to be known in this World ; for did
we perfectly know it now, it could
not be very great ; and therefore
we should entertain our selves with
the hopes of this unknown Happi-
ness, of those Joys which now we
have such imperfect Conceptions of ;
we should be earnestly desirous of
the Kingdom of Heaven, and that
Righteousness to which it is pro-
mised.

The general Use and Improvement of what has been said upon this Subject, is this ; If we all believe this Happy State, that we would resolve by God's Grace to live as such, without making any the least doubt in our Minds concerning it. Let the Belief of it raise our Minds and elevate our Thoughts to the things above. Let us often ascend thither in our Hearts now, whither we hope to ascend shortly with both Souls and Bodies. Let us consider that these Bodies of ours, as well as our Souls, were made for higher Designs, and better Enjoyments, than any here of this World, and that therefore they ought to be the Subjects of Virtue and Purity now, as they are to be of Happiness hereafter.

But let us always remember, that as Heaven is the highest Happiness that we can attain to, so it is the hardest matter in the World to attain

tain unto it. This is not said to discourage any one, but rather to caution us, that we are not fooled by the Devil and his Emissaries, who are wicked Men, into an idle Conceit, that it is easie to get to Heaven; for the *Lord Jesus Christ* himself, by whom alone it is possible for any of us to come there, hath told us the contrary, assuring us with his own Mouth, *That the Gate is streight, and the Way is narrow, that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it, St. Mat. 7. 13.* And we cannot but all of us acknowledge as much, if we consider what is necessary in order to it. For *what must we do that we may inherit Eternal Life?* Or rather what must we not do? We must mortify every Lust, for one Sin will keep us out of Heaven as well as twenty. We must exercise every Grace, we must embrace every Opportunity of Religion, and we must perform every

ry

ry Duty that is required of us, both to God, to our *Neighbours*, and to our *Selves*. We must walk in *all the Commandments of the Lord blameless*, to the utmost of our Knowledge and Power, so as to be sincerely, entirely, constantly Holy in all manner of Conversation; for it is the irrevocable Decree of Heaven, *Heb. 12. 14. That without Holiness no Man shall ever see the Lord.* And therefore upon the whole, if ever we desire to see the Face of God and the Blessed Jesus, who loved us, and gave himself for us; if we desire to converse with Saints and Angels; if ever we mean to live in eternal Light, and Love, and Rest, and Peace, and Joy, and Glory, nay, even in Heaven it self; let us remember to fear God, and keep his Commandments, which is the whole Duty of Man.

DISCOURSE IV.

OF

HELL.

From Bp. TAYLOR, &c.

AMongst all the Arguments to Repentance and a Good Life; those have the greatest Force and Power upon the Minds of Men, which are fetched from another World, and from the Final State of Good and Bad Men after this Life : The Righteous shall be rewarded with eternal Happiness, and the Wicked shall be sentenced to everlasting Punishment. Both the Blessedness we shall attain, and the Misery we shall escape by yielding Belief

Belief and Obedience to the Gospel, are both of them, of *eternal and endless Duration*. And there are a great many that do believe these things, and yet do continue in their Wicked Courses, because they never take any time seriously to consider, what Heaven and Hell are, and of what sort and kind that Happiness or Punishment will be; and how much it behoves them to use all diligence to attain the one, and to avoid the other. The one part, *viz.* the eternal State of Rewards in the other World, has been already considered; I come now to consider the eternal Punishment of Wicked Men, which is represented in Scripture by a *Worm that never dieth, a Fire that never shall be quenched; Eternal Damnation; Everlasting Fire; Everlasting Destruction; the Blackness of Darkness for ever; a Lake of Fire and Brimstone where they shall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever,*

*ever, and where the Smoak of their Torment ascendeth for ever and ever. These are the Evils which the Gospel threatens to Sin: And if these be not sufficient to deter Men from it, what can be sufficient? What Evil can that Man be supposed to be afraid of, who is not afraid of everlasting Burnings? A greater Evil cannot be threatened, the very naming of which, strikes the Fancy with all the Images of Terror; and he who is not scared by this, would certainly be less scared by the Threatnings of a less Evil; and yet we have reason to think, that the Punishment it self is much more terrible than all the Representations of it; for it is the sharpest, the acutest, the most tormenting that can be endured; the Scripture all along expresses it by such Pains as are here most afflicting to us; as the Biting and Gnawing of a Worm, the being beaten with Stripes, the noy-
blues
someness*

somness of Brimstone, and the *Burning of Fire*, the extremity and exquisiteness of which, no Tongue can possibly express, or Heart conceive. Consider before-hand, what an unspeakable Misery it would be (and yet it would not be so much as a Flee-biting to this) to lie everlastingly in a red hot scorching Fire, depriv'd of all Possibility of dying, or being ever consumed. How dreadful, how terrible is Fire, which the *Persians* of old were wont to call a most fierce and devouring Monster. But alas ! What Comparison is there between ordinary Fire, and the Fire of the Eternal *Tophet*, which is said to be kindled by the Breath of Almighty God ? The fiery Furnace of *Babylon* was dreadful enough, tho' kindled only by the Finite Power of an Earthly King : How dreadful then must the Furnace of Hell be, which has all the Treasures of Torment infinite Wisdom could

could invent? If all this be not sufficient to make these Torments dreadful, remember that they are said, *To be prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* We know these Infernal Fiends are the most inveterate, and most malicious Enemies of Heaven, such as did not only at first endeavour to Dethrone their Almighty Creator, but have ever since employed all their Malice and Subtilty, to affront God, and draw Mankind into a Conspiracy against Him. Sure then that Fire which was at first prepared for these inveterate and malicious Enemies of Heaven, cannot possibly want any ingredient of Torture, either Infinite Wisdom could invent, or Infinite Power inflict: And yet such devouring Flames as these, are not only prepared for the Devil and his Angels, but likewise for all impenitent Sinners. How fearful a thing then will it be to fall into the Hands
of

of the Living God? What Soul doth not quake and melt with a Thought of this Fire, at which the very Devils themselves do tremble? But besides this Pain of Sense, there is yet a more horrible Punishment still, and that is the Pain of Loss, Privation of God's Glorious Presence, and an utter Separation from the Everlasting Joys, Felicities, and Bliss of the State above, the serious Contemplation of which inestimable and irrecoverable Loss, doth incomparably more afflict an understanding Soul, than all those Punishments, Tortures, and extremest Sufferings of Sense. To this we may add, that the Everlastingness of both these sorts of Torments, and the Hopelessness of our being freed from them, will be yet another Hell. For in Hell the *Worm never dieth, and the Fire shall never be quenched*; this is a Life in Torments that will never be ended:

A

A Life, that will continue to *all* *ETERNITY*.

And now that we come to speak of *Eternity*, tho' the Word has a fixed Meaning, yet how are our Thoughts lost and bewildred when we set our selves to meditate Things; when we speak of a Thousand, or Ten Thousand, or even of a Million of Years, we have some Notion of what we say; but when we come to multiply these Thousands, and Millions, by Ten Thousands, or Ten Millions, or by Millions of Millions, our Thoughts are not capacious enough to conceive, and our Mouths want Words to express that infinite Length of Time, which these Numbers do comprehend; and yet all that these Numbers denote, is nothing in Comparison with *ETERNITY*. When the Sinner has lain in Hell as many Millions of Years, as there are Sands on the Sea-shore, or Stars
in

in Heaven, he will be no nearer an End of his Torment, than he was the first Moment he entred into that Place of Torment. Who can read without trembling, when St. *Mark* tells us, *chap. 9. v. 49.* Namely, *That the Damned shall be Salted with Fire.* Such it seems is the Dreadful Nature of the Infernal Flames, that they do torment, but not consume. Like Salt they preservethose wretched Persons they seem to devour. O Cruel Mercy of Hellish Flames! O Preservation, worse than the most Dreadful Destruction.

And when we believe that wicked Men shall live such a Life, after this short Life is over; Does it not highly behove us to think of it now, and to make the best Provision that is possible, that we may escape this, and enjoy the other; the Happy Life of Saints which are in Heaven? Believe it, Life, and Death, and Heaven, and Hell, are
with

with them no Trifles. These have been all set before us ; not this Frail and Mortal Life, which is hardly worth the having, were it not in order to a better and happier Life ; nor a Temporal Death, to get above the Dread whereof, should not methinks be difficult to us, were it not for the bitter and terrible Consequences of it : But an Eternal Life, and an Eternal Enjoyment of all Things which can render Life Pleasant and Happy ; and a perpetual Death, which will for ever torment us, but never make an End of us.

These God propounds to our Choice : And if the Consideration of them will not prevail with us to leave our Sins, and reform our Lives, what will ? Weightier Motives cannot be proposed to the Understanding of Man, than everlasting Punishment and Life Eternal.

Nay, further, tho' I have hitherto spoken to you as Christians, which

which believe that there will certainly be a future State of Rewards and Punishments ; yet if you have at all attended to, and are any whit affected by that Representation that I have made to you, of the *Joy* of *Heaven*, and of the *Pains* of *Hell*, and of the *Eternity* of both, I would now dare to Address myself to you, even tho' I thought you believed very little of these Things, and questioned the Truth or Certainty of them ; and methinks I should not doubt, but that I might prevail with you, and perswade you to Repentance, by these *Gospel Motives* of *Heaven* and *Hell*.

For put the Case, that it is very *uncertain*, whether there will be an *Eternal Life*, or no ; nay, put the Case that it is Ten to One, that it is much more probable, that there will not be any such Life after this ; yet when we consider what *Eternity* is, and what a vast difference there

there is between living in *perfect Joy*, and in *everlasting Burning*; and when we consider withal, the Shortness of this present Life, and how *little* we can lose in it by abstaining from Sin; and how *little* we can suffer in it, by the strictest Holiness and Virtue; even the bare *Possibility*, that there will be an Eternal Life, tho' we had no certain Revelation, and no other very good Assurance given us of it, would be abundantly *sufficient* to deter us from Sin, and to stir us up to well-doing. For if we live well here, and there be really an Eternal Life, it will be happy for us, that we have made this Preparation for it; but if there should indeed be no other Life after this, we shall then be no Losers by what we have done; we shall be then in as good a Condition, as others will be in who did not believe it, nor live in expectation of it; and all that
Trouble

Trouble which the Exercise of Piety and Virtue now costs us, is not worth speaking of; it is no more than we ought in Reason and Prudence to be at, altho' at the same time we believed it to be very uncertain, whether there would be any such Eternal Life or no.

For this is what we call and account Wisdom in all other Cases, viz. to provide not only against Certainties or high Probabilities (but when it may easily and conveniently be done) even against Possibilities too. We reckon him an unwise Man for the World, who being in a good way of getting, spends all as fast as it comes in, when he has no present need to spend so much, and lays up nothing against Old Age, when if he lives to it, he will be past his Labour, and not in a Capacity to get enough to support himself: And yet of all those that do wisely make
some

some Provision for old Age, not one in ten perhaps lives to it. But nevertheless, the bare *Possibility* that a Man may live to old Age, and the very great Inconveniencies that he will suffer, if he shall have nothing then to live upon ; makes it very adviseable for every one of the Ten, to lay up somewhat, (if he can do it) against that time ; and he of the Ten, whose only Lot it will be to live to be old, is not a wiser Man for making such Provision, than the other Nine, who yet, in the Event, will be never the better for their Labour.

Put the Case therefore, that there is the same or even a much greater *Uncertainty*, whether there will be an Eternal Life after this ; yet when we consider *what an Eternal Life is* ; when we consider, that if there be a Heaven, and we can procure our Portion to be there, we shall be happy infinitely, and

unspeakably Happy to Eternal Ages; and that if there be a Hell, and we do not take care to avoid it, our Lot will be extremely miserable, and we shall be *Tormented Day and Night for ever and ever, in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*: And when we consider withal, the very *little Trouble*, in Comparison, that it will cost us to attain *that*, and to avoid *this*; that 'tis but the Labour of a few Years, and that the most we can suffer by it, is the loss of a little sensual Pleasure, for which, after this Life is over, we should be never the better; or the enduring of some little Pains or Hardship which will be soon over; and for which, if no Good should ever come of it after this Life, we shall however be then never the worse; considering, I say, thus, the Infinitely vast and wide Difference, that there is between being Eternally Happy, and Eternally

Mise-

Miserable, 'tis enough that it is *possible*, 'tis more than enough, that 'tis *probable* that there will be such a State ; and if we neglect to make Provision for it, because we are not *absolutely-certain* that it will be, it is plain, that we do not act so prudently in this, as we do in other Cases, that are of infinitely less Moment and Concern to us, and that (as our *Saviour* says) *the Children of this World, are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light*, St. Luke 16. 7.

Upon the whole Matter then, it nearly concerns us all to prepare for the worst that may happen, and however it be, this is certain, that it is infinitely wiser to take care to avoid Hell Torments, than to dispute them, and to run the final hazard of them. This in all Prudence we ought to do, and this is by all possible Means to be provided against : So terrible, and so intole-

o DISCOURSE IV.

rable is the very Thought, yea the very least Suspicion of being Miserable for ever. Let me therefore, with all Seriousness intreat you, *To work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* As you love your own Immortal Souls, and value that Infinite Price which Christ has paid for them, as you dread the everlasting Burnings of the Infernal *Tophet*, and earnestly desire the Endless Joys of *Heaven*; be persuaded to break off your League with Sin, and make your Peace with *Almighty God*, that when ye come to die, your *Blessed Saviour* may see the Travel of his Soul, and be satisfied; that he may then be as ready to bestow on you, as he was to purchase for you; that you may at last receive the End of your Hope, even the Salvation of your Souls.

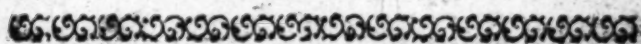
And Blessed, Thrice, and for Ever Blessed be *Almighty God*, that there

there is yet *Hope concerning us*, and that we are yet in a Capacity of *fleeing from the Wrath to come*; and that the Miseries of Eternity may yet be prevented in time: And that for this very End and Purpose, our most Gracious and Merciful God hath so clearly Revealed these Things to us, not with a desire to bring them upon us, but that we, being warned by his Threatnings, might not bring them upon ourselves. And indeed we must forsake Sin, every Sin, the most Darling Sin, if ever we hope to get to Heaven. The *Young Man* in the Gospel *lacked but one Thing*, and yet fell short of *Heaven*. And if we will still indulge our selves, either in Covetousness, or Unclean-ness, in Swearing, Drunkenness, or any other known Sin, we can never expect to receive the Reward of the Righteous. For *Christ* has told us plainly, *St. Matth. 19. 17.*

that if we will enter into *Life*, we must keep the *Commandments*: Which that we all of Us may do, God of his Infinite Goodness grant, for his Mercies Sake, in *Jesus Christ*: To whom with the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost*, be all Honour and Glory, Dominion and Power, Thanksgiving and Praise, both *Now* and for Ever, *AMEN*.

FINIS

Since it is possible this little Treatise may fall into Hands that may be destitute of Helps for Family Devotion, I have added (from Mr. KETTLEWELL) a Morning and Evening Prayer for such Occasions.



A

Morning Prayer

FOR A

FAMILY.

O GOD, who art the Giver of all good Gifts, and the Father of Mercies, we thine unworthy Servants intirely desire to praise thy Name, for all the Expressions of thy Bounty towards us. Blessed

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be

bethy Love, that gave thy Son to die for our Sins, to put us in a way of being happy, if we would obey thee ; after all our wilful Refusals of thy Grace, still hast patience with us, and hast added this one Day more to all we have mis-spent already, to see if we will finish the Work which thou hast set us to do, and fit our selves for Eternal Glory. Pardon, Good Lord, all our former Sins, and all our Abuses of thy Forbearance, for which now we are sorry at our Hearts ; and give us Grace to lead more holy Lives, and to be more careful in improving all future Opportunities. Make thy self present to our Minds, and let thy Love and Fear rule in our Souls, in all those Places and Companies where our Occasions shall lead us this Day. Keep us Chaste in all our Thoughts, Temperate in all our Enjoyments, Humble in all our Opinions of our selves, Charitable in

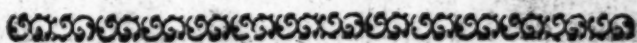
in all our Speeches of others, Meek and Peaceable under all Provocations, sincere and faithful in all our Professions, and so just and upright in all our Dealings, that no Necessity may force, nor Opportunity in any kind allure us, to defraud, or go beyond our Neighbours. When thou bestowest Good on others, let us not Envy, but Rejoyce in it: and when thou addest any to our selves, let us own thy Mercy, and humbly thank thee for it. Afford us convenient Supplies in all our reasonable Necessities, and protect us against the approach of all Dangers. Make us diligent in all our Business, and give such Success to our honest Endeavours, as thou seest most expedient for us; and teach us contentedly to submit, and not to repine at any thing that happens to us by the Allotment of thy wise Providence. In all our Passage thro' this World, and our manifold
Concerns

Concerns therein, suffer not our Hearts to be too much set upon it; but always fix our Eye upon the Blessed Hope, that as we go along, we may make all the Things of this World to minister to it, and be careful above all things to fit our Souls for that pure and perfect Bliss, which thou hast prepared for all who love and fear thee, in the Glories of thy Kingdom.

Extend thy Grace, we further beseech thee, to all Men, in all Places; especially to the Governours and Subjects, to all both High and Low, Rich and Poor, who pray for it, or need it in these Kingdoms. Bless all our Relations, who are near us in the Flesh, and all our Friends and Benefactors, who are endeared to us by their Kindnesses. Forgive all our Enemies, give them Hearts to fear thee, and to be kind to us. And supply all us, and all others, with what-
soever

soever thou seest proper for us, for
Jesus Christ his sake, in whose
Blessed Name and Words we still
recommend our selves unto thee,
saying,

Our Father, &c.



A N

Evening Prayer

F O R A

F A M I L Y.

O Most Gracious God, who
daily multipliest upon us thy
Mercies, notwithstanding we e-
very day renew our Provocations;
accept, we beseech thee, of our
most humble and hearty Thanks for
thy

thy unspeakable Kindness towards us. Blessed be thy Goodness, which has this Day supplied us with Food, and Necessaries; and has preserved us in Health, the chiefest of all outward Enjoyments; and has prospered the Work of our Hands, and lent us our Friends to be still a Support and Comfort to us. Adored be thy Love and Patience, which hast allowed us one Day more to amend our ways, and assisted us by the Suggestions of thy Spirit, and thy gracious Providences, to make up that Resignation, Humility, Contentedness, Chastity, Sobriety, Meekness, Charity, and other Vertues, which are yet wanting in our own Souls. We desire to shew ourselves duly sensible of these endearing Benefits, by learning to depend upon thy Providence, which has been so watchful over us; and to be contented with thy Orderings, which are so wisely fitted to our
own

own Advantage ; and applying all Opportunities to the Increase of that Righteousness and Holy Living, which thou requirest at our Hands. We fain would do it, and are here sincerely resolved to endeavour it ; and thou hast promised to aid all those who labour in so good a Work. Be it then, O Lord, unto thy Servants according to thy Word, and enable us by thy Grace and Holy Spirit so to do.

We are sensible, O God, how highly we have offended thee, altho' we stand thus indebted for all we have, or hope to enjoy, to thy free Grace and Bounty. How many ways have we dishonoured our Profession, and revolted from the Vows which we made in Baptism, by Pride, and Envy, and Anger, and Discontent, and Evil-speaking, and serving divers Lusts, which then we utterly renounced, and promised never to live in again? We
are

are heartily grieved and ashamed for these and all other our misdoings, and are fully resolved by thy Grace hereafter to amend them. We unfeignedly repent of them, and for Christ's sake humbly beg to be forgiven, and that thy Grace and Holy Spirit may rid us of them for the time to come. Our full purpose is to endeavour after a through amendment of our ways, and thy Promise is to help us therein : O let thine Arm be our Almighty Aid, and then we shall return to them no more.

Keep us under the defence and care of thy good Providence this Night ; make our Sleep safe, and refreshing to us. Fit us for our great Change, that it may not surprise us unawares, but that having led holy Lives, we may be happy in our Deaths, and have Comfort and well grounded Hope in thee.

Give all Men Grace to repent of all their Sins, and to become thy faithful

ful Servants. Let all Christians live to the Laws of that Religion, which they profess. Especially bless these Kingdoms wherein we live. Let our Governours Rule with Justice, and our People Obey with Chearfulness. Make the Rich and Prosperous to shew themselves Temperate in using, and Charitable in distributing of their Substance; and the Poor and Afflicted, to be patient and contented under their Burthens. And cause us all to love as Brethren, and to be Pitiful and Tender-hearted towards all Men. Preserve our Friends in their Souls and Bodies; Forgive our Enemies, and make them kindly affected towards us: And do whatsoever thou seeest fitting for us all, for thy Son, our Advocate and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, who has taught us in his own Words thus to Pray, *Our Father, &c.*

